

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 06205 122228Z
ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
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S E C R E T BEIRUT 6205

STADIS//////////

FOR NEA/DRAPER FROM PARKER

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAID LE US
SUBJECT: AID TO LEBANON

1. IF YOU ARE UNEASY, I AM DISTURBED BY YOUR 294375 ABOUT PROBLEMS WITH FMS PROGRAM AND OUTLOOK FOR ECONOMIC AID TO LEBANON IN GENERAL. WITH REGARD TO LATTER, I APPRECIATE ADMINISTRATION'S DETERMINATION TO OPPOSE SUPPLEMENTALS, BUT IN SAME SPIRIT OF RATIONALITY HAVE BEEN UNWILLING RECOMMEND AID PROGRAM FOR FY 1979 WITHOUT HAVING SOME CLEAR IDEA OF WHAT IT WAS TO BE USED FOR. WE HAVE HAD TOO MANY LEBANESE REQUESTS WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN THOROUGHLY THOUGHT OUT IN ADVANCE AND WHICH, WHEN WE COME TO EXECUTION, ARE STYMIED BY LEBANESE GOVERNMENTAL DISORGANIZATION AND PARALYSIS.

2. WE NOW HAVE A LEBANESE REQUEST FOR US TO PARTICIPATE IN A MINI MARSHALL PLAN. OUR 6162 DESCRIBED THE CONVERSATION TOM IRVIN AND I HAD WITH MOHAMED ATALLAH ON THE SUBJECT. THIS PROJECT IS STILL VERY FUZZY. ATALLAH HAS DISCUSSED IT ONLY WITH THE PRESIDENT, AND HAS SO FAR NOT GOTTEN DOWN TO THE SPECIFICS OF WHAT MUST BE DONE. FURTHERMORE, HIS PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION, WHICH IMPLIES AN ELABORATE BUREAUCRATIC RUN AROUND LEFT END IN ORDER TO AVOID

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CABINET DEBATE ON THE POLITICAL ISSUES, IS RISKY AND WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT ITS VIABILITY. IT NEVERTHELESS OFFERS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR DOING SOMETHING FUNDAMENTAL ABOUT LEBANON'S SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ILLS. WE THINK WE SHOULD AT LEAST EXPLORE THE IDEA FURTHER AND SEE WHETHER IT IS SOMETHING IN WHICH USG CAN PARTICIPATE.

3. WE VISUALIZE OUR ROLE AS BEING PRIMARILY ONE OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND ONLY LIMITED DEVELOPMENT FINANCING. WE WOULD HOPE THAT OUR PARTICIPATION ALONG WITH IBRD WOULD ENCOURAGE SAUDI AND GULF STATE FINANCING OF THE LARGER RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. IN OUR 6162 WE SUGGESTED TENTATIVE AGREEMENT TO ALLOCATE \$35-40 MILLION IN FY 1979 FOR AID TO THE PLAN. BEFORE WE GO ANY FURTHER IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO KNOW WHETHER SUCH A PROPOSAL HAS ANY CHANCE OF ACCEPTANCE. IN PARTICULAR, ARE WE PREPARED TO ASSIST THE CDR WITH A TDYER IN EARLY JANUARY TO DRESS UP THEIR PROPOSAL AND BRING INTO CLEARER FOCUS SPECIFICALLY THE COMPONENTS OF AN FY 1979 ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE PACKAGE?

4. RE FMS, LEBANESE HAVE NOW EXHAUSTED FY 77 CREDITS. IF NONE AVAILABLE IN FY 1978 IT WILL BE VERY EMBARRASSING, PARTICULARLY AFTER SECRETARY'S PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT THAT \$50 MILLION WOULD BE AVAILABLE, IF THE CONGRESS APPROVED. IF I UNDERSTAND YOUR 294375 CORRECTLY, IT IS THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH, IN THE FORM OF OMB, WHICH IS NOW MAKING PROBLEMS, NOT THE CONGRESS. IF WE DO NOT EVEN ASK CONGRESS FOR AN FY 78 PROGRAM, IT WOULD RAISE QUESTIONS IN LEBANESE MINDS AS TO SERIOUSNESS OUR PURPOSE AND WHETHER WE HAD NOT ADOPTED NEW POLICY LESS FAVORABLE TO SARKIS. IS THERE ANYTHING I COULD AND SHOULD DO TO DRIVE THE POINT HOME?
PARKER

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NNN

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